

INTEGRITY

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Spirituality For The Laity

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The Age of Lay Sanctity



YOU cannot say, as some do, that men are getting better and better with each succeeding age; history isn't like that. Nor can you say that men are getting progressively worse. What can be discerned is a pendulum movement. Temporal society moves toward Christ or away from Him. When it is moving toward Christ men's minds and men's institutions tend to focus more and more on Christ; the best artists take to painting madonnas, the best architects work on cathedrals, and even the minor events of family life are marked by sacramentals. Such was the time of the Middle Ages.

The Renaissance brought about a sharp change and the pendulum started swinging in the other direction, away from Christ. Men didn't say so, they said they were going after the irrelevant-to-Christ, the secular; they wanted the wholesome, the healthy, the well-ordered, the material, the materially good. But that is impossible for fallen and redeemed man. We must either look above the natural order to the supernatural order (and when we do so the natural order is rectified and preserved), or we will fall below nature. When the pendulum swings away from the sacred (as a term) it leads not toward the secular but toward the profane. That's where we are now, at the *bad* natural because we thought we could have the good natural without Christ. Our artists are busy painting lascivious girls for advertising posters, our architects are erecting temples to mammon in the form of skyscraper office buildings, and divorce is rampant.

Today's Crisis is a Spiritual Crisis

It is because we have reached the end of the pendulum swing away from Christ that all our problems today are basically religious. It is folly to think that we can go from wars to peace without reference to Christ, or from no housing to adequate housing, or from economic disorder to economic order. Men are still trying but every time they try they fail. It is because we are fallen creatures who cannot hold to good except through our redemption in Christ. The most realistic program today is the Jocist program "to restore all things in Christ." The Jocists propose to reverse the trend of our times, to reorient society in Christ. That's the only thing that will work. The dreamers and wish-

ful thinkers are those who place their full confidence in natural remedies, laws, leaders, science or psychiatry.

Since the world is sick for Christ, it is therefore the Church's remedy. Wise men will look to the Church for the remedy. What does the Church propose? It seems (one cannot be certain) as though Christ is using this occasion for His Church to explore the means of sanctification in the lay state. The laity are caught in the hiatus between religion and life: God by perfecting them in sanctity will change them to bridges for the sanctification of the temporal order.

The Trend Toward Lay Sanctity

The evidence of recent history points to the sanctification of the laity as the major ferment going on in the Church. There is informal evidence at every hand: the surprising number of lay people who seem to desire a more than ordinarily holy life, the increase of interest in religion among Catholics and non-Catholics alike, the number of devoted lay people who don't seem to find their place in the religious life and yet desire an intense Christianity.

The testimony of the Specialized Catholic Action movement abroad is particularly telling. They have held out the highest ideals of sanctity to their members and have actually produced many contemporaries within the lay state. Records of the lives of the Jocists who died in concentration camps are being carefully preserved, against the day that the Church may want to investigate their causes.

There is also the testimony of the ordinary Catholic layman, especially the young one. He may not yearn for martyrdom or the heights of prayer. He may long for a quiet, bourgeois life in the suburbs supported by conventional religious practices. But unless he is blind he is beginning to see the handwriting on the wall: "It is no longer possible to be mediocre. Are you for Me or against Me?"

Lay and Religious Life

Religious life has always been regarded as higher in itself than the lay life, and rightly so, because the religious life is a way of perfection. Religious orders have set up integral conditions which of themselves conduce to sanctity: community life, the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, observation of silence, the Office and so forth. The laity are called to perfection too, but they are necessarily busy about temporal affairs and subject to multitudinous temptations and distractions. Lay saints do not besprinkle the missal as do religious saints, and many of the most promising laity of hagiography ended by repudiating their lay state—mothers going off to found convents over the prostrated bodies of their children, widowed queens retiring to the cloister, etc.

So there has grown up the feeling that the laity are inferior members in the Church, a feeling which is currently expressed by the remark, "If you want to be so holy why don't you go into the convent?" And, indeed, a lot of lay people who do want to be holy are behaving like religious out of the cloister. They try to keep up religious practices in the lay state,* sometimes saying the Divine Office, or forming into semi-religious communities under a modified rule. Especially in Europe there are a lot of these groups of people who are sort of half-religious and half-lay. They may represent a temporary phenomenon in the Church, one which will later disappear as they themselves develop into real religious communities, or as the principles of sanctity in lay life are further worked out. But even if these institutes find a permanent place, they will not satisfy the demand for a path of perfection in the lay life because they are not susceptible of general application.

Different Approach to Lay Sanctity

Ordinarily, the combination of the lay state with practices borrowed from the religious life is extremely difficult. The two don't mix very well. The lay person hasn't time to say the Office, has duties of his state which interfere with silence or make it impossible to take on extraordinary penances. When he copies the practices of the religious life he is always seeming to withdraw and to lose his power of influencing his fellow laity.

May it not be that the path of perfection for the laity will, superficially at least, be radically different from that of the religious life? Is it not possible that the incarnation in the lay state of the essential likenesses in all roads of perfection will produce quite different means from those the religious use as their path? Laity shouldn't shrink from the lay life but use it as a road to God. That does not necessarily imply worldliness, less so now that we must restore all things in Christ than at any other moment in history.

The Keynote Is Apostolicity

It is the lay apostolate which is the keynote to lay sanctity. This is primarily so because it offers a magnificent opportunity for referring all our actions to Christ. You can't get very holy if you are pulled in two directions at once, if your life is divided between two things which cannot be referred to the same end, if you are a business man during the week and a practicing Catholic on Sundays, if you are building a railroad days and doing spiritual reading evenings, if you are on the assembly line most of the time and taking the parish census on Saturdays. To advance in holiness you have to get the "single eye" the Gos-

* We do not wish to deprecate the piety of lay people who take on modified religious practices, as Third Order members for instance, but we don't believe they represent today's *main* way to lay sanctification.

pel talks about. The religious does it by leaving worldly activities and substituting sacred activities. The lay apostle does it by transcending temporal activities with the lay apostolate.

The factory worker is no longer primarily the sixth man down in the second row, putting on a screw as the product passes. He is primarily another Christ, providentially associated with adulterous Stanley Lucas on his left and despairing, cynical Joe Pulaski on his right who would not know about their marvelous dignity if he were not there to tell them. The monotonous movement he makes with his hands is merely the occasion for his being there, and the more tiresome it becomes the more grace he will win for his neighbors by bearing it patiently.

The young nurse no longer yearns for the excitement of the operating room or the ease of the supervisor's desk, but she turns willingly to the bedside, not only because Christ is in the bed and she is called to help Him, but because the other nurses don't see Christ and she must know and love them so that their eyes will be opened.

So it is, all the way down the line even to the advertising copy writer who declines to continue working against Christ and the student who wants to know the first truths first, because the world needs them. The apostolate gives the layman a single eye.

It also does something else which is conducive to sanctity. It sets up supernatural charity as the guiding principle of his life. He works for the love of God in the love of his neighbor. He chooses his associates for the love of God, singling out those who need him rather than the most pleasant companions. He gives up his sleep or his lunch or his leisure or his money for the same reason. He does not think always of the sanctification of his own soul. He thinks of others, even wanting to get holy because "you cannot give what you haven't got." And so indirectly he does become holy, whereas the pious, unapostolic lay person is very apt to turn in upon himself and fail to get holy despite hours spent in church and a grim determination to be a saint.

Renunciation and Dedication

The religious renounces all except a bare minimum of the things of this world for the sake of God. By doing so he helps detach himself from the love of these things. If the layman is to become holy he must also become detached, but he must ordinarily do it in the opposite way by using the things of this world for God. It so happens that in our time this is an especially good channel to sanctity.

Take the matter of marriage. The religious foregoes the pleasure of marriage for God's sake. The layman who undertakes the full responsibilities of marriage today for God's sake is hardly in danger of forgetting God. First let him decline to limit his family and he will

realize that he couldn't indulge in "gracious living" of the Jinx Falkenberg and Tex McCrary type, even if he wanted to. Then there is the little matter of the fact that our society doesn't go in for family wages, provide family houses any more, or even give verbal encouragement parenthood. Married people today have to practice heroic trust in God, heroic indifference to public opinion, heroic fortitude in respect to living arrangements. Many are their trials even when they are happily married. The unhappily married who refrain from divorce, and do so with a cheerful countenance, are the modern martyrs.

Consider also the matter of talents. The religious often gives up the use of his talents for the sake of prayer or penance, or else he makes the use of his talents subject to the will of his superior. It is an antidote to pride. Here, too, the lay apostle is faced with the opposite action to achieve the same effect. He has to use his talents, *plus*. Lay apostles have to show a willingness to be used as instruments, and that usually means they will be used to do great things, greater things than they are able. That means they will be sustained by God's grace, and have to count on supernatural aid. Then if they get proud, God takes the props from under them and they are nothing again.

What is true of talents is true of riches and other things of the world. Within an apostolic context material possessions become such a burden of responsibility that having nothing looks like a remote paradise by comparison, much in the way that the sick man's immaculately clean, white hospital bed looks inviting to the worker exhausted by a day on his feet and an hour's ride in a crowded subway. If Henry Ford II, for example, were to dedicate his life to undoing the accumulated ills he has inherited, the very process would lead to a sort of crucifixion, compared to which a hermit's cave and bread and water diet would look inviting.

In short, life in the world today is a heavy cross by its very nature. Most people are busy running madly away, jumping from one escapist pleasure to another. Anyone who turns around and picks up the cross probably needs, at least at first, the comfort of whatever incidental consolations come his way.

Penance in the Lay Life

Once the laity orient their lives to charity and apostolicity, the incidental and inevitable suffering involved becomes meritorious. The crowded subway becomes a hairshirt and the jibes of fellow-workers a sort of flagellation.

Religious often take a vow of stability, which helps keep them from being attached to a particular place. Today's laity are visited with chronic instability which is an opposite cross producing the same general effect. The family that moves around after seasonal work or searching

for decent housing has but to remember the Son of Man Who has nowhere to lay His head, in order to have a certain peace without penmanency. The lay apostle who travels (and apostles travel an awful lot) gets to feel more at home in any Catholic church than in his own home base, because it is the church that gives continuity to his wanderings.

It's paradoxical how many of the conditions of lay life are the opposite from the religious life and yet can be turned to similar use. The silence of the cloister is an aid to recollection. The noise of the factory and the subway do not conduce to recollection but can be accepted as penances which will make it easier to recollect later. It is hard for the laity to practice custody of the eyes, but it is a mortification using the eyes to look at the ugliness and disorder that man has made of the modern city, if seen that way. The misunderstanding of parents is a common trial to lay apostles, and useful for their sanctification. Parents often object because their children don't wish to be worldly successes and make a lot of money. Some degree of poverty is an almost inevitable accompaniment of the apostolate, if only because the world doesn't reward handsomely those who go against its spirit.

The above are common mortifications which accompany the lay apostolate. They are usually followed by others voluntarily undertaken to promote this or that cause within the apostolate.

Aids and Consolations

The center of the lay apostle's day is Mass and Communion, as it is for the religious. But with the laity Mass is the sole official sacred activity of the day and comes to be of even more relative importance than in the convent or monastery.

It is significant that dialogue Masses and much of the singing participation in the Liturgy is being promoted by lay apostolic groups. It is significant, too, that Daily Communion is encouraged and easily available today, because the lay apostle has to have this Daily Bread if he is going to live by faith in an atmosphere which speaks of God only by His absence. It is a pity that our Catholic immigrants remained in the large cities and were sucked in by urban industrialism, but the churches they built every few blocks now serve as "power houses" for the present generation of the Church militant whose apostolate is within the old order.

Next to the Mass, spiritual direction is of primary importance to the laity. Religious have the rule of their order and the counsel of their superiors to guide their lives, but the laity have neither a rule nor a Christian order in society, nor (usually) marvelously Christian parents to guide them, and it has ever been true that a man is not trustworthy as his own guide. It is hard to find a good spiritual director, especially

we who understands the lay apostolate, but the laity have at least the advantage of being free to search far and wide in order to find one. Once found, a good spiritual director will give the laity a spiritual anchor and orientation.

Christ led a very active life during the time of his apostolate. It is only occasionally that He was able to retire alone to the mountains to pray. The laity lead a similar life, with only an occasional opportunity for a retreat. The retreat movement has anticipated this need. Now that retreat houses are fairly widespread, and whole religious orders have dedicated themselves to the task of making retreats available, there is a growing demand for retreats of greater spiritual intensity. Those who are in the apostolate need solid and somewhat advanced doctrine. They want Saint Thomas and Saint John of the Cross rather than watered-down, minimum Christianity and pious exhortations. But they are beginning to get it here and there, even if they have to arrange for their own retreats and retreat masters.

Community Without Formal Bonds

The most convincing evidence that the ferment among the laity is the beginning of something new rather than just a stimulation of Catholic lay life in general, is that it is uniting the lay members of the Mystical Body. Without direct formal compulsion, for instance, the members of Specialized Catholic Action come to a unity in Christ marked by an authentic spirit which is everywhere the same, and by an organization which is already nearly world-wide.

One curious thing is that the organization precedes the full development of the movement. It is international and cosmopolitan from the beginning, Catholic as the Church. Even where there is no organization there is cooperation among apostolic groups and a feeling of mutual security and confidence which makes formal organization unnecessary. The unity is always an effect of the realization of oneness in Christ, rather than on selective natural grounds. Lay apostles meet, even for the first time, as old and dear friends. It is shocking by contrast to notice that fellow-members of a half-dozen years standing in an organization like the Holy Name Society or the Sodality, can yet be almost complete strangers to one another, each hiding his own sorrow, or shame, or ideals, and each conscious of superficial differences between them of wealth, position or beauty.

God wishes not only each man's salvation, but also the salvation of the whole body of the Church. We must grow to see ourselves not as isolated units, as self-sufficient as possible, but as parts of an organic whole which is increased or diminished by the actions of each one. We all have functional positions within the Mystical Body. If we can teach doctrine we must do so, but we need the cooperation of others to

do it efficiently. If we have personality gifts, or can act, all those things are frustrated by an individualistic approach to religion. It is therefore a sure sign of ill health in the Body when each Christian works unorganized and alone, and a sign of good health when Christians can and do organize and cooperate. That is happening today. The Mystical Body is beginning to realize itself as one Body among the Catholic laity.

Cooperation Between Religious and Laity

If the laity are the front-line troops of the Church today, it does not follow that the importance of the religious life has diminished. Nor does it mean that vocations to the religious life will fall off. The lay apostolate usually increases them. It merely means (if our thesis is true) that the Church in growing to its fullness has now worked out the fundamental conceptions of religious life, that religious orders have been established and incorporated into functional positions into the permanent life of the Church, and that now the Church moves on to enroll the laity in a closer embrace than heretofore.

You frequently hear laity speak of the Church as though it did not include them, as though nuns and priests were somehow more surely Catholics than they. Indeed it has been a fairly widespread opinion among the laity that they were somehow outside the door looking in. One unhappy consequence has been that they haven't felt any particular responsibility within the Church. Theirs to save their own souls (with minimum effort) and contribute money. Theirs not to know doctrine, beyond a catechetical level. Theirs not to apply Christian principles in daily life. Theirs not to talk religion or defend the Faith. As a consequence *all* the responsibility for the Church has been dumped into the hands of the clergy and religious and now lay Catholics are beginning to criticize the way "the Church" is doing things that they should be doing themselves.

The work of the laity is not to usurp or intrude upon the proper work of the religious, but to reorient the temporal affairs of society toward Christ, to concentrate on marriage, business, housing, politics and the rest. They will need the direction of the clergy in varying degrees according to the nature of the projects, and some work will be shared necessarily by religious and laity, but once it is quite clear that the laity have their own proper work to do in the Church the relationship between religious and laity will become closer and more harmonious. It will be easier for nuns to teach future lay apostles than future millionaires, easier for hospital nuns and lay nurses to understand each other when both lead dedicated lives according to their fashion. We shall all begin to see that the eye has need of the hand . . . that there are many functions within the same body.

PETER MICHAELS

Editors' Note: In proportion as men's interest in their souls has dwindled in recent years, so has interest in their bodies been heightened. It therefore seems appropriate to include in this issue two articles on the cultivation of the exterior life.

"Beauty Is Your Duty"

I was prompted to write this article by an experience I had a few weeks ago. I was out with a friend of mine, Kay. Since we are to be bridesmaids together we were shopping for dresses. We finally settled on one which we hurriedly ordered, so that Kay could make her five o'clock appointment at the DuBarry Success School. She did not want to go alone, so she asked me to come along. I did. It was a pathetic revelation, a concrete revelation of the emptiness and hunger of the lives of many modern girls. DuBarry is supposedly attempting to open up the road of "beauty" to the modern woman, to be the means of bringing a richer, fuller life to her through the enhancement of her physical charms.

While seated in the swank reception room I was prodded by a well-made-up woman who looked to be near thirty-eight. Her tones were perfectly modulated, her attitude bespoke a simulated interest in the customer. While Kay was given a figure and face analysis I was told the "whys" of the DuBarry Success School. "After all, what else were we put on this earth for, but to have fun, look attractive, enjoy life," the well-modulated voice said. I was given various folders on the "Success School," one of which was captioned: "For a More Useful Life." It told of the many advantages involved in the course. Aside from helping you lose all the excess weight you are carrying, DuBarry styles your hair, shows you how to dress and make-up, gives you dancing lessons, and generally helps to create a "new you." For one hundred and fifty dollars and three nights a week of your time over a six weeks' period, DuBarry assures you of a "new, more useful life."

As it was after five, the receptionist was showing signs that she was anxious to leave, consequently I had time to look around the room. The girls who worked there were perfectly groomed, overly made-up, and blank in expression. They looked rather like mannequins. Their work was done for the day, the charm was turned off, and the emptiness of their lives seemed to take possession of them.

A pert, young girl in shorts appeared and was asked to usher us through the "school." She was on the evening staff and was one of the leaders of the exercise classes. One of the most striking things I saw was a class in exercise. The bored-looking teacher counted: "One-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three," to the rhythm of the record, while the class bumped and bounced in unison. They were spurred on

by the proverb blatantly painted on the wall: "Beauty Is Your Duty." Many of the women looked to be in their late thirties, and some in their forties. They were perspiring, and looked flushed and tired. When we came out of this room we were shown the food bar where girls of varied types, shapes, and height talked and ate. A few girls, who evidently had money enough, told our young escort that they were back to bother her again, to take another course.

We did not take the elevator but instead walked down the stairs. We passed many other students. One face that I particularly remembered was that of a woman who must have been in her fifties. The muscles in her arms were sagging, she looked tired, disinterested, and rather lifeless in her expression. Again I saw emptiness.

When we came out Kay was even more enthusiastic than ever. "Gee, by the time Peggy's wedding comes around, I'll be a rail. I'm not going to tell Harry about this, I'm going to see if he notices." The more she thought about it the more her enthusiasm grew. I tried to suggest that I thought she was silly to take the course. "After all you're paying them one hundred and fifty dollars to help you use your will power. Go on a diet, get an exercise book, do it yourself." "Oh no," she said. "If I pay the one hundred and fifty dollars I'll stick to it." We talked more about it over dinner. Kay vacillated a little. She finally said, "If my mother could hear you she'd shoot you, she's been trying to make me take this course for years."

Kay is almost twenty-nine, a Catholic college graduate, unhappy in her job working for the city. (She is afraid to make a change, with the possibilities of a permanent appointment in view, and the resulting pension and "security." She may regret the change in the years to come, she says.) Every "serious" romance she has had has blown up before it could be maritalized. The latest opportunity, Harry, is inclined to think he is precious to all womankind, and presently living on the fat of the "fifty-two-twenty club." "I wish he'd get a job, that worries me," Kay says. But then she proceeds to plan-out-loud whether or not she can get up the gumption to say "no" to his next bi-weekly invitation to go dancing. If she says "no" now and then it might arouse more of his interest in her.

Kay is very feminine, sweet, and normal in her aspirations. More than anything she wants a home and a family. Things get progressively dimmer in this regard, and Kay is getting progressively more discouraged and discontented.

Perhaps Kay is extreme in some aspects of her immaturity. But she is not unlike a vast majority of women who are seeking happiness in the form of a man and simply not finding it.

The average fellow, raised on the standards of Hollywood, wants a gorgeous girl who has a charming personality. The average girl can't measure up. Seeing that she never seems to please enough, she desperately tries to improve her looks, her figure and her conversation through the means at hand. But success in finding a mate doesn't necessarily follow.

As the years go by the need for other, manufactured interests increases in this type of girl. Cocktail parties, the theatre, regular dinner engagements with girl friends, are usually an integral part of the single girl's agenda. She becomes an avid reader of the "best sellers." With it all life becomes more bleak with each passing year. It seems to have a big hole in the middle that has never been filled. The single woman is self-conscious, feeling that she has failed. This idea is largely ingrained in her through the attitude of her friends and community toward her. There is no place for her in the social set-up. She is a fine machine in an office, but there is no place for her after hours. She compensates by trying to remain the fashion-plated glamor girl when she is well on in her forties, and even after. She usually throws herself into some inane job, calls it a career, and tries to convince herself that she is satisfied. But the big hole remains.

The possibility that it might be the Will of God that she is still single is a thought that receives little head-room. It seems too remote, vague, rather unlikely, and very unattractive. And so the mad rat-race goes on, with "getting a man," and alternate, false interests continuing in their foremost role in the single girl's life. All real success, in the mind of the average woman, seems to depend on whether or not she marries.

Being a normal, single woman I can understand the aspirations of the single girl. But one very potent factor in my reaction to being single has been my observation of my married friends and acquaintances. After a year of marriage most of them evidence no more joy in living than does the single girl. Admittedly (if she is married to a boy in whom she has faith) the married girl feels more secure; she has a feeling of belonging, and a knowledge that, good or half-baked, her life is settled. She has chosen and, hopefully, found her place. This in itself is of prime importance to the contentment of the normal woman. Notwithstanding this, I maintain that the life of the average married woman is no more one of joy than it was when she was single. It is merely in a different groove.

The average married girl has children, though not too many, and each, whether planned for or not, naturally brings a transitory happiness. She does as little of her sewing and cleaning as her husband's

paycheck allows. She gets tired of the ordinary routine of "keeping house" for her husband and family. She doesn't want to nurse her babies. She looks forward to the day when her children will be less of a source of work. She even gets tired of having her husband around when he is home on vacation. Of course she loves her husband and children, but they do not have the real glamor-spot in her life. She does not seem to be wholeheartedly, joyfully dedicated to them.

Nor is this attitude limited to the married girls whom I know personally. I perceived this barrenness, this lack of real enjoyment of life, in the women at DuBarry's. I see it at Alumnae bridges, in my place of work, in the faces of my fellow-BMT-commuters. It's a kind of dull, empty boredom with whatever is at hand, that looks forward to sitting down for a cigarette, buying a new outfit, having a new hair styling, or buying a Bendix or a new house. The acquisition of a husband and family is not necessarily a real answer filling the void in the heart of the modern woman.

Admittedly a successful woman is one who finds her life in love and motherhood. But the beacon light to which she must look to find herself, and to animate and vitalize her role, is not man.

We, as Christians, were taught in our earliest years that we were made simply to know, to love, and to serve God. If we are to realize the significance of this debt, we must necessarily conclude, in the final analysis, that God is our vocation whether we are single or married. He is the only Reality worth our true concern. All other aspects of our life have their value only in relation to Him.

The married woman must come to realize her tremendous task: she must grow up wholeheartedly in the love of God through the service of her family. Through her husband she must give herself to God, in him she sees the Will and the Image of her Lord. Pregnancy should be a joyous period. In that time God makes her a vehicle through which another soul may enter into glory. As a mother she comes to know more intimately her Crucified Savior in the anguish of childbirth. And she knows her kinship with Mary when she nurtures another Christ in the form of her baptized child.

Every aspect of her routine should be impregnated with the idea that all is for Him: ironing shirts, washing diapers, scrubbing floors, molding young minds and hearts, submitting her will to a selfish, tyrannical husband, or a wonderful husband, all are part of praising the Lord. If she loses a perfect child in an accident and has three mental defectives at home, or if she has six little geniuses that enter the religious life, she must realize that it is all God's plan—His hand molding her sanctity and that of her family's.

The single girl must realize that her real joy will come first in a sincere resignation and consequent embrace of the reality that God wants her to be single. She will come to know a very real joy in relaxing in and loving whatever His Will brings in each day. God will give her the wisdom to know that she is called to as real a role of motherhood and of love as is the married woman. In the loneliness that single life is bound to bring she will come to know more intimately her Master. Consequently, her joy will be greater in spite of, and because of her loneliness. She has a wonderful opportunity wholeheartedly to give herself to her Lord through the service of those with whom she lives, as well as her community and co-workers. As the married woman must awaken a sense of beauty in her children, so must the single woman, through the growth of beauty within her, bring an awareness of Him to all whom she serves.

He alone is the one to Whom we must dedicate ourselves no matter what our role. He is the End for which all of us are given all other ends. We must give ourselves to Him in the tiny ups and downs of life, as well as in the great aches and miseries we might be called on to bear. The great joys as well as the indifferent things that we experience have no less an important place in the Christian scheme of things.

If we, as women, are in any way to make our lives take shape in this plan, we must realize that essentially our bridegroom is God Himself. Infinite Love has made us for Himself. We must lay ourselves bare before Him, as victims of His Will, in order truly to fill the void, the emptiness, the hunger in our hearts. As women we shall be filled only through a wholehearted dedication of self to our Divine Master.

I once witnessed the espousal of a Carmelite to Christ. When the joy-filled bride had taken off her wedding dress, and put on the holy habit of Carmel, she prostrated herself before Our Lord. Face downward, she lay outstretched in the form of a cross before the altar. A large mantle was placed over her small, still form. She truly symbolized her aspiration: here was a victim of Divine Love! All the bells in the community rang out in joy. We, as women, must come to know our kinship with this spirit, for we shall only begin to find ourselves when we are prostrated before Our Lord and Master. When He really begins to become our everything then we really begin to live joyously and fully. The void within us is gradually replaced by the beating heart of Christ. We give Him our nothingness, the emptiness or the fullness of our lives. He gives us Himself!

MARY THATCHER

The "New Me"

I glanced hastily through the mail just delivered. Two letters for Mother, a postcard for Joseph, the *Saturday Evening Post* for Dad, and finally, a letter for me, "Miss Catherine Cronin, A63." I almost dropped it when I saw the number. What could it be this time? About every month or so I receive a letter bearing the mystic number "A63," inviting me to purchase something or do something that will add to my perfection, physically and otherwise. I am on some sort of a self-improvement mailing list.

I opened the letter and out fell several pages of literature on Walter B. Pitkin's *Life Begins at Forty*. Really, this is too much . . . I still have ten more years to go! Last month I received an earnest plea to try "Twinkle Eyes," ridiculous-looking pads that I should wear at night to keep crows' feet away. The preceding month's letter recommended *The Ethel Cotton Course in Conversation* (a correspondence course in ten easy lessons—"Inject a few raisins of conversation into the tasteless dough of existence"), and prior to that I was asked to buy vitamins, a new dictionary, Lindlahr's latest book on new and better diets, and to subscribe to a book-of-the-month club. Each month brings a fresh reminder of my unsuccessful attempts to create a "new me."

I hardly know when I began to suspect that there was something wrong with the "old me." Perhaps it was a teacher's remark that my appearance and personality were "neither negative nor positive." His reprimand did not worry me too much for I was too busy acquiring credits. I was well aware that I didn't know how to win friends and influence people, but I thought I didn't care. So what if I was a flop socially! Popularity wasn't that important and marriage did not attract me. Marriage meant self-sacrifice and drudgery, not necessarily happiness. I didn't want to share my life with anyone; I was determined that some day I'd live alone and like it. So I had to be a success in the business world and once I had my degree nothing could stop me.

I graduated from college just when our country was entering the war and jobs were plentiful. I had no difficulty in getting a good job (excellent pay and short hours) but I was disappointed that my work and new independence did not bring me the joy I had anticipated. I started drifting from one job to another: brokerage, insurance, labor social work, civil service. To the employment agencies' queries about what I wanted to do in life, I had no answer. I didn't know. I had been taught in school (aside from the *practical* business courses I had taken) that I was created to love and serve God in order to be happy with Him in heaven. I believed this to be true but it wasn't the sort of thing I could write on a questionnaire. The words "love" and

serve" meant nothing to me. I went to Mass on Sunday but what was I to do with the rest of my time? All I wanted was happiness, but what was happiness? I tried telling myself that I had every reason to be happy. I had everything I wanted. It never occurred to me that I might not be happy for that very reason; that I was always getting, never giving.

I remembered my teacher's admonition about being neither negative nor positive and took inventory. My mirror reflected a too-tall, too-heavy girl of nondescript coloring. My plain features wore an habitual gloomy expression which usually prompted people to be sympathetic and helpful when I least needed their sympathy. What could I do to renovate this unattractive facade?

I enrolled at the Helena Rubenstein beauty school, which promised for a generous fee to create a "lovelier me." They gave me a detailed analysis of my assets and liabilities, prescribed a diet and put me through exercises to slim me down, advised me what styles and colors to wear, and showed me how to apply makeup more effectively. I emerged from this treatment a few pounds lighter and a little self-conscious of my paler complexion, wider mouth and shorter hairdo. But the course hadn't done the trick. No one noticed or cared that I looked a little different. Certainly I felt no different. I had the uneasy feeling that something was missing—perhaps I had better concentrate on the personality angle.

I joined the local YWCA and took a course called "Adequacy." It was a course for business girls which covered everything from "voice culture" to "mental hygiene." After six months of this I felt inadequate indeed! No matter how hard I tried I couldn't be vivacious, nor could I maintain a serene smile more than two seconds. It was too exhausting. Despite the breathing exercises and reading aloud, my voice remained a mumbling monotone, with none of the lilting and vibrant tones they tried to develop. To be happy all I had to do was to keep repeating to myself that "the world is a lovely, lovely place and I am a lovely, lovely person!" The more I tried this stunt, the more I knew it was a lie.

I abandoned the "Adequacy" course because it seemed too superficial and enrolled in a "Creative Writing" course at the nearby university. But I soon discovered I had nothing to write about. Other courses proved equally disappointing. I'd sit in class and gaze uncomprehendingly at my teacher. He could not hold my attention more than five minutes. I knew he didn't have the answer I was looking for. I feared that no one had the answer.

My friends urged me to join the local Catholic club for business girls. I began attending the weekly lectures which were very interest-

ing, the Saturday night dances which were terribly overcrowded (four girls to every boy), and joined the swimming club. But the girls in the swimming club rarely went swimming. They were lonely working girls who enjoyed the weekly meeting and supper because of the companionship and hours of conversation it offered. I was dismayed by the number of girls just like myself, wandering from one leisure-time activity to another: dramatics, arts and crafts, forums, athletics, lectures, teas, bridge parties, photography, concerts, and so forth.

I considered going into the Red Cross, the WAVES or the WACS but I was afraid to apply. How could I be sure that they were any different? All I could give to the war effort was my services one night a week in the Civilian Defense Corps.

By this time I was thoroughly frightened. What was I looking for? What was I living for? Thinking was a torment I couldn't escape. Sleep was almost impossible and my work began to suffer. I now had a responsible position which I had managed to hold for three years but even my boss's trust and confidence in me couldn't keep me interested. I resigned over his astonished protests and offer of more money and more responsibility. I didn't want to work. I didn't want to live.

Several agonizing, idle weeks passed before I spotted an ad in the newspaper: "Are you floundering? See Miss T. . . ." Early the next morning I presented myself to Miss T. She was a woman of about forty, understanding and sympathetic, and called herself a vocational consultant. After an hour's conversation (costing ten dollars) she suggested that I take her ten-weeks' course, after which time she would know me better and be able to tell me what to do with my life.

The course consisted of a ten-minute test at the beginning of each class (tests formulated and rated by Columbia's Psychology Department, the results of which we were given at the end of the ten weeks), an hour's lecture by Miss T, and a short discussion period. The classes were limited to ten girls (most of whom were Catholics, I soon discovered, one a fellow alumna). I have since discarded the notes taken but I remember very vividly that she told us that in order to lead happy, useful lives we had to have a goal—a goal we could choose for ourselves, depending on our religious or philosophical attitudes. She discussed thoroughly the opportunities for women in business, especially the newer fields of radio, television, electronics, aviation. She recommended reading such books as *Pick Your Job and Land It*, *Personality Unlimited*, *Give Yourself Background*, *Designing Women*, *So to Speak*. She had guest speakers tell us about their own fields. All of them impressed us with the necessity of being well balanced, well groomed, well fed and well read in order to "sell" ourselves to our prospective

employers, in order to get to the top! Moreover, we should be unselfish and serve others because this not only developed a pleasing personality but was profitable in the long run. It began with self and ended with self.

At the end of the ten weeks Miss T spoke to me privately about the results of the tests. My intelligence and aptitudes revealed that I could learn and do almost anything I wanted to learn or wanted to do, but, to Miss T's chagrin, the tests also revealed that I had no ambition whatsoever! Moreover, she accused, my personality was too submissive and retiring. She informed me, unhappily, that there had been nothing wrong with any of the jobs I had held in the past but that I would not be a successful career girl. The fault was mine. I just didn't want to *get ahead*. She speculated that marriage might be a satisfactory outlet. I protested that I didn't want marriage but that I might succeed in the business world if she could tell me *why* I should get ahead. She dismissed this by saying I was taking life much too seriously; that I should acquire a hobby or indulge in a mild flirtation. I left in tears, sorry for myself and for Miss T.

Much to my family's relief I got myself another job. "Everything will be all right now," they assured me, happy at my decision to start all over again. They had been so very kind but thought all my suffering was imaginary. What more should a girl want in life except an interesting job, good friends, pretty clothes and a nice home?

I was in a really glamorous field this time, publicity and advertising. The atmosphere was different and I was stimulated by the feverish activity going on around me. Back to evening school I went, this time to study copywriting. I was flattered by the praise I received for the occasional good blurb I wrote, but in a few months' time the professor complained that I had lost my enthusiasm. The last ad I had submitted on C Shoes had lacked conviction. I replied that I didn't care if people went barefoot, and didn't return to his class.

This must stop, I decided. I must stop asking *why* and *what for*. I must stop seeking or I will have no peace. I shall try real hard to settle down just like everyone else and accept my job as my goal. I shall spend all my time thinking and talking about clothes, movies, best sellers, the latest news. I shall stop off for a cocktail with the others at five o'clock. I shall even follow Miss T's suggestion about a flirtation. A lot of it was going on in the office. Why should I be different? Why should I hold back from the merry-go-round?

My new-found complacency was soon to be shattered, however. I met up with a young Catholic Actionist whose zeal for "restoring all things in Christ" prompted her to ask about my work and my aims in life. After a brief but enlightening conversation with me she sur-

prised me by saying that I was not doing the Will of God. I didn't understand what she meant by the Will of God, nor did I understand what she meant when she said that as a Christian I should be an apostle but I knew immediately that I was on the right track this time. Here was the answer I was seeking. In my concern about myself I had forgotten God and His Providence. What a relief it was to learn that there was a divine plan into which I must fit. How God revealed my part in His plan is another story, a story not yet finished. I had to be re-educated to living not for self but for God. It's an education that has been going on for several years now, an education that is painful at times but which is opening up a new and fuller life. I have found my place in the lay apostolate and am just beginning to glimpse what is meant by Christian joy.

I laughed as I threw away this morning's letter. How delightful that I can laugh. Life doesn't begin at forty, Mr. Pitkin. Life begins when one begins to love. How I wish I could find the mailing list that I am on. How I should love to send a message to the others on the list, begging them not to believe the fraudulent claims that promise happiness, entreating them to look up from themselves into the face of their Creator Who is the only one who can satisfy their hunger.

CATHERINE CRONIN



A Humanity For Christ

The lay person today who desires to be holy often is faced with two opposing courses from which to choose. On one side he finds holiness as it is presented as an ideal for lay people toned down considerably. We hear such things as, "This is all" (*this* being practically nothing except attendance at Sunday Mass and keeping the more obvious commandments) that is expected from lay people"; "You are too spiritual for a college girl" (holiness being regulated according to one's state in life!); "Lay people should be pious but God does not expect them to be contemplatives" (which is a good excuse for staying a comfortable Christian in a rut of mediocrity); "Follow the little way" (which is distorted into a bargain special of getting something for nothing).

On the other hand there is an ever-increasing realization that God calls lay people as well as religious to sanctity. "There is only one unhappiness and that is not to be one of the saints" is oft-quoted. "Contemplation is in the normal way of sanctity." "It is given to no one to be mediocre."

And if the lay person, by the grace of God, comes to the conclusion that the second school of thought is right in theory, he is tempted to feel that the first is more practical. For if he aims at sanctity (without minimizing the goal) the first question that hits him is: How? How shall this be done?

Perhaps we read or hear many suggestions, many ways to sanctity. But they do not all conform to life in the world. We find them difficult to practice in our environment. We find ourselves either forgetting about them altogether or taking them very seriously. In fact, we become genuine "eager beavers" at the spiritual life. And we find ourselves developing it alongside of, and in addition to, our other pursuits.

There is the tendency to develop "nine lives." And our attention is called constantly to them. You hear mention of your social life, your business life, your spiritual life, your sex life, and so on. And if the lay person has to give all these things his concern, how is his spiritual life (one among so many) to predominate and be his chief concern?

The answer is one of integration; that you do not "work at" the spiritual life apart from your other "lives" but that all your activities and all phases of living are ordered to your growth in holiness, that they all contribute to the growth of the Christ-life in you. For the Christian truly lives when he lives Christ. The Christ-life does not exclude the other phases of your life, nor is it synonymous with the spiritual life as it is understood in the limited sense of being the care of one's

soul. For as Christ is God and Man, to develop the Christ-life should be to develop all the powers of the soul and body in accordance with the purpose of God and for His glory, by means of the *vocation of the individual*.

Vocation and Restoration

This idea of vocation will help us to answer the question of what we mean by the Christ-life.

Our vocation indicates the way to holiness for us and should be the means of integrating all aspects of our lives.

The lay person today, and more particularly the lay apostle, has the vocation of restoring all things in Christ. This restoration is a sweeping, all-embracing thing. It covers everything—material goods, the social and political order, immortal souls. Because our society is so decadent, because the world is estranged completely from God, restoration has replaced reparation as the object of work. (We cannot merely atone for mortal sin, we must convince people of the fact of sin.)

A cathedral may have a leaky roof and need *repair*. If it is bombed and blasted to its very foundations it has to be *restored*. Other ages had their sins, strifes and troubles. In the Christian ages sins were committed and there were saints who made reparation for them. But it would seem today that reparation is not enough (and this is not meant to minimize the ideal—or the great saints—of reparation). Christianity is not suffering from a leak; it's been blasted. No one saint today is going to prop up a falling Church. Rather it appears today that God wills the re-establishment of Christianity to be the work of many—of a multitude in fact—even though it truly will be the work of One.

For the Christian order can be restored today only in the way it was established. And as it was established by Christ it must be restored by Him.

If the lay apostle has the vocation to restore all things in Christ, then it follows that he has the vocation *to be Christ*, or, in other words, to be a *humanity* for Christ—a humanity for Christ in whom the Word can again be made flesh, to fulfill His mission of establishing order and harmony between God and man, of saving souls, and founding a society that will be conducive to the saving of souls.

If, then, our vocation is to be a humanity for Christ, we will become holy by becoming just that. The degree that Christ becomes incarnate in us will be the degree of our sanctity. Our mission is to take Christ where He could not go unless we generously give Him our *humanity*.

We must be sanctified through our apostolate.

No Short Formula

It would be easier in a way if we could be given a few very definite rules for sanctity. If we were told to get up at five-thirty, fast twice a week, give tithes of all we possess, spend our lunch hour praying and then we'd become saints, things might look less complicated. But while it's true that each one has to find the way for himself by the light of the Holy Spirit, personal spiritual direction and the circumstances of this life, there are certain definite things characteristic of the life of Christ and, if we are to be another humanity for Him, these things must be characteristic of us.

The Holy Spirit and Mary

The Son of God became man in Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. We will become a humanity for Christ only if we have the same dispositions as did Mary. She had simplicity of heart and singleness of purpose, and she surrendered herself to God.

To be ready to be a humanity for Christ means for us, too, that we are surrendered to God, that we have placed ourselves entirely at His service. The simplicity of our hearts is the simplicity of love: that we have decided to love God supremely and with all our strength and that we are striving to root out from our hearts all other loves. This is a work that requires time and valiant effort, but at least we must have started to undertake it. The singleness of purpose is to have our desires set on one goal and one goal alone. (You cannot desire to be a humanity for Christ and a successful banker. Nor can you be like the man who said his religion was *as important* to him as his job! Only one thing can matter ultimately and lesser goals will have to assume their hierarchical places.)

But these dispositions, this simplicity of heart, singleness of purpose and surrender, are not our work alone. Rather it is the work of the Holy Spirit preparing our souls for Christ. And by humble, persevering prayer we beg Him to enlighten our minds and move our wills and prepare us for our vocation.

It was the union of love of Mary and the Holy Spirit which brought forth Christ. Consequently, as it is the Holy Spirit Who gives us the initial grace and yearning for sanctity, it will be the Holy Spirit Who makes Christ incarnate in us. But the Holy Spirit made Christ incarnate, in the first instance, in and through and by means of Mary, and we will become humanities for Christ only in and through and by means of her.

Invocation of Mary is therefore the first step in our holiness, as it is the first step toward the fulfillment of our desire to be a humanity

for Christ. Lay apostles who have felt that concentrating on Christ made them forget Mary have been concentrating on a distorted Christ. For it has been said that we are related to Christ on His mother's side, and if we forget Mary we are likely to forget the Son of God is human. His mother gave Him His humanity.

How then shall we be a humanity for Christ except through her?

Characteristics of Christ

If we are docile to the Holy Spirit and devoted to Mary, and the seed of the Christ-life is in us, how then shall it bear fruit? And how shall we truly become humanities for Christ's divinity?

Two things stand out in the life of Christ and if He is to re-live that life in us, these two things must be characteristic of our lives. They are a purpose and a rule of action. The purpose is expressed in the words: "I seek not My own glory but the glory of Him Who sent Me." The rule of action is expressed in the words: "My meat is to do the Will of Him Who sent Me."

The Glory of God

We wish to be a humanity for Christ for one purpose, the glory of God. Christ in us again seeks His Father's glory.

We don't seek this (to the full extent) simply by saying a "Hallowed be Thy Name" (May You be glorified) and letting it go at that. Nor do we fulfill Christ's purpose by making a morning offering and doing what we want all day long. Offering the day for God's glory and then forgetting about it does not answer the problem. Efforts have to be made to remedy this situation. At the other extreme is the suggestion that one should say constantly and continuously, "All for Thee, Sweet Jesus. All for Thee." Now these suggestions, although well meaning, leave out one very important thing. Certainly it is good to do everything for God's glory. But we must stop to consider if the particular thing will make for the glory of God. Can *all* be for Him? There's no point in concentrating on offering and disregarding *what* we offer. Having a purpose is an excellent thing, but purpose implies intelligence and the judgment of means ordered to an end. We can seek the glory of God if **our mind is the mind of Christ**. By our honest efforts, and most of all by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we shall discover what things *are* for God's glory. Then our offering of them to God will become organic (nothing superimposed by mere words) and something springing from the very nature of the thing. Because a thing is *good* it is for God's glory and should be offered to Him.

Seeking God's glory under these conditions becomes a very definite thing. It means that you don't object if Negroes move next door to you, because with the mind of Christ you know that it will be for

the glory of God and you don't worry about property values; that if you are a teacher you teach the truth whether or not it makes you popular with your pupils or gives your college admittance to the American Association of Universities; that as a social worker you work in conformity with the mind of Christ regardless of what it does to the professional standing of your agency; that you don't remain in a lucrative position that is unchristian (and offer your work to God) but change to one that you know is for the glory of God; that you seek to work where you are needed for saving souls, and not where your personal advancement or profit is assured.

"Seeking not My own glory". . . As a humanity for Christ you are willing to be cast aside for God's glory, to have your efforts disregarded and unrewarded (perhaps the Catholic Action section you started is a failure, perhaps your college cell is suppressed); to find yourself a failure in the eyes of the world and your fellow Catholics. They may not say, "You are the Samaritan and have a devil," but they may say you are a communist because you defend the rights of workers, or a fanatic because you think religion does have something to do with business.

"Seeking not My own glory". . . As a humanity for Christ you seek that all may be *one*. You may disagree with other apostles, but you do not seek the triumph of your own opinion but that the mind of Christ be discovered for God's glory.

To seek God's glory and not our own is not an easy thing. It is difficult because it goes against the grain of our selfishness. It requires patient practice and continual effort. But in the world today we are given constant practice in it, for if we try to live as a humanity for Christ we are forever going against the world. And that for our sanctity is a good thing. To attain union with God the soul has to be purified. Today the purifications are right here. Strive to be Christian and you will have mortifications and sufferings. Do only what is for the glory of God and you get rid of what is not for the glory of God in your soul. Your apostolate thus becomes the way to your sanctity.

The Will of God

We said that there is no concrete, simple rule of action. Well, there was a simple rule of action in the life of Christ. The reason it does not appear simple in our lives is because of the blindness and weakness which sin has brought to us. Christ's rule of action was the Will of God. As humanities for Christ we must become increasingly amenable to that Will.

It should be a source of comfort to lay people who are earnestly striving to be holy and who despair of ever living an orderly, regular life (You have decided to attend Vespers and the baby falls and hurts

Modern American Man



- ① Mrs. K— who has children and receives help from her neighbors because, since it is her own fault, she is not a worthy object of charity.



- ② Sally P—, M.A., who cheerfully works as a waitress since refusing to pay \$500 locally extorted for a teaching job.



- ③ John M— who is looking for a job is directed to a good but it is by the fact that he has an infirm father.

- ④ Mr. D— the who wants to but usually for selling tickets, committees, tax census, counting collection, etc.



- ⑤ Bill C— an agitator for social justice who is plagued by communists for being a fascist because he's a Catholic, and condemned by Catholics for being a communist because he loves his enemies.



⑥

Mary B— who wants to marry and have a Christian family but can't find a fellow who wants to do either.



himself. You settle down to do some spiritual reading and a friend telephones to ask your advice on her latest romance. You get up early to pray and find yourself later sleeping over your typing) that Christ's life—particularly His public life—seemed singularly devoid of schedule. We find Him hemmed in by crowds day and night, healing on the Sabbath Day, being awakened when He needed sleep. But the foremost fact is that He was doing God's Will, that He was about His Father's business.

We are humanities for Christ in order to let Him continue being about His Father's business. And this business is a work of love—love of His Father and love of our neighbor. Consequently, the Will of God will be manifested most often by the dictates of love. (Need we emphasize we mean supernatural love directed by the Holy Spirit and not sentimentality or weakness. Love of our neighbor does not dictate that we help her buy a fur coat, neither does love of our parents mean that we have to spend the rest of our lives with them.) Penance may be a good thing but it is not God's Will if it leaves us without strength for the apostolate. It may be good to spend the night in prayer but not if it leaves us too weary to talk to our fellow workers. This is not to imply that voluntary penance should not have a part in the life of the lay apostle. Undoubtedly it will have more of a part than in the average lay life. What we mean is that penance and mortification must be regulated by vocation and that most of the penances will come through the rigors of the apostolate and the constant immolation of self demanded by the dictates of the Divine Will.

The law of love goes before all others (that is why Christ healed on the Sabbath). If you are on your way to Church and you see a drunken colored woman lying on the sidewalk, you stop to help her and don't continue on. Love of neighbor demands it and your sanctification demands it too. (If you've ever done it you know you have an excellent opportunity to practice virtue and grow in humility—especially if the neighborhood is white, Catholic and bourgeois!) You stop writing, even though the article you're writing may convert the world, if someone knocks at your door and asks for help.

The point is that following the Will of God you fulfill all the duties of your vocation (after you have determined what they are—you don't immolate yourself for Prentice Hall or the preservation of the Stock Exchange) and strive to fulfill the law of love.

Development of the virtue of charity, not of the virtue of religion, is the focus of your life, as it was of Christ's. Being a humanity for Him might not mean hearing three Masses daily, but it does mean a caring heart and soul for the salvation of your neighbor. You will

end time in prayer, of course, but your prayer should become more and more the realization of your "being on terms of intimate friendship with God and your loving converse in secret with Him Who loves you." Your prayer is an informal thing, not something to be measured in terms of time and formulae, but the expression of your life and love. Being a humanity for Christ you are growing in awareness of Him, toward constant converse with Him Who is always with you.

Growing in love for your neighbor, you grow in love for God. And love is the measure of holiness.

Lamb Among Wolves

For lay apostles whom God evidently intends to work in an un-Christian environment there is a special difficulty. If your life is on the land there are helps to holiness. Everything speaks of God. You see the birds and are reminded of His Providence, you see a lamb and think of the Lamb of God. In a Christian community you can see Christ in your neighbor's actions. But if it is God's Will that you live in the city and be a humanity for Christ in a factory or office, what then? Evidently nature and people do not contribute to your holiness.

It may be a help to remember that Christ didn't live in a Christian environment either. If, through Mary and the Holy Spirit, you are becoming a humanity for Christ, your environment won't interfere with your sanctity. Being among sinners won't keep you from being a saint. Christ in you will work to make your environment Christian, not by white-washing it but by changing and restoring it. If you are truly unconscious of your role as a humanity for Christ, then your environment will contribute to your holiness in spite of itself.

Likewise with people—you will see Christ in them by His very absence from them (as Christ saw His Father's image obliterated in sinners). That is, if you are growing in awareness of Christ. It is like suddenly taking note of a familiar picture, which has been hanging in a spot for twenty years, because it is no longer there. You see the empty place vividly on the wall. You'll see Christ because you will see the empty hearts of people, and His absence will strike you painfully. So you will try to bring Him there and as you fill other hearts you will be filling your own with Him.

Partakers of His Divinity

But if you are truly a humanity for Christ then you cannot fail to partake of His divinity. For us who have the vocation to be His humanity, the words of the Offertory prayer have special meaning: "That we will become partakers of His divinity Who vouchsafed to become partaker of our humanity."

Being His humanity cannot fail to bring us to union with God.

For Christ's divinity cannot be separated from His humanity. We cannot be a humanity for Christ and not grow in grace which is the life of the Trinity.

That is why lay apostles can hope to become contemplatives. For if they have earnestly prepared their souls as far as they are able and have a tremendous desire for it, God will give them this grace.

Letting Christ in them seek the glory of God will help them in the work of dying to self. Doing the Will of God according to the dictates of love will enable them to get rid of sin and grow in virtue and that is our work in the growth of holiness: to get rid of all the rubble in order that the Holy Spirit may take over. Our action must prepare us for His action. Our apostolate must enlarge our hearts for love and render us ever more responsive to Him.

As charity increases in our souls, His gifts begin to operate in us in their super-human mode, which means that our minds and wills are moved by Him swiftly and effortlessly; that instead of having to debate over each particular action whether or not it is God's Will or for His glory, the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate in us and bring us quickly to decision.

Thus we are prepared for passive prayer or contemplation.

Our apostolate should be a preparation for contemplation. For it is a temporal work that should prepare us for an eternal one. And our apostolate will bear more fruit if it is the overflow of our contemplation. The two go together.

Being a humanity for Christ means growing in grace and participation in His divinity. If we are faithful to our vocation, He will be faithful and bring us to the fullness of His life.

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS

IT WILL BE A COLD DAY IN WINTER

the day that a garment from you may warm the chilled body of a European victim of war. War Relief Services is designed to dispense the clothing throughout the stricken areas where it is needed most. Organize with your friends and send donations of new clothes for the Storerooms of the Holy Father to

WAREHOUSE, WAR RELIEF SERVICES, N.C.W.C.

599 Eleventh Avenue,

New York City

Spiritual Direction of Lay Apostles

The Church in our day has called for an intense lay apostolate. This call has been answered by innumerable forms of lay apostolic activity throughout the world. Consequently, there are many thousands of lay apostles today, married as well as single, of both sexes, on whom the Church has freely bestowed tremendous responsibility for the temporal and spiritual welfare of their fellowmen. More than ever before many people have entered and are entering into Christ's apostolate and therefore more than ever before we find among them a pressing need for spiritual formation. These lay apostles receive their formation, it is true, through the Liturgy, the Sacraments, prayer, their apostolic activity itself, and often enough through the discipline and the technique of their particular form of the apostolate. But they are asking for more. They are seeking, sometimes explicitly, more often implicitly, for spiritual guidance.

This is nothing new in the Church. Spiritual direction is and always has been a bona fide tool of the ascetical and mystical life. What is new (at least in the modern Church) and what is decidedly healthy is the vast number of lay people who are now seeking guidance along the way of perfection. These souls are decidedly conscious of their apostolic responsibility and at the same time are painfully aware of their spiritual poverty. They are insatiately hungry for the things of God; they are crying for bread and they must not be handed a stone in the form of any weak or inadequate excuses such as "no time," "big crowds at Confession," "whoever heard of lay people having spiritual direction," etc., etc. Now is the hour. We simply must meet their demands if they are to remain effective instruments of Christ's Will. The Church has called them to this work; it is our duty as priests to help them in every way to achieve their vocation.

Moreover, the Holy See has more than once reminded priests that this obligation to mold the souls of lay apostles rests squarely on them. As Pope Pius XI on February 4, 1933, in a letter to the Argentine Episcopate said, it is

the proper ministry of priests to mold the souls of members of Catholic Action according to Christian models, above all the souls of those who shall become its leaders, for only those whom Holy Orders have rendered ministers of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of God, possess, in virtue of the divine mandate which they have received, the necessary powers which they ought to dispense among others.

The practice of virtue in the modern world is extremely difficult.

Lay people have problems confronting them that sometimes make it virtually impossible to preserve the Christian way of life in the midst of modern social problems. Pope Pius XII explicitly treated this point in his Pentecostal Message in 1941:

Can the Church—that loving Mother, so deeply concerned for the welfare of her children—remain unmoved and silent at the sight of their perils? Can she act as if she did not see and understand the social conditions which render it difficult, at times virtually impossible, to preserve a Christian way of living in accordance with the commandments of the Supreme Lawgiver?

Laymen must inform their spiritual directors of these problems and situations otherwise priests will find themselves advocating spiritual remedies that simply do not apply to the life of a lay apostle in our day. Theological textbook answers are not enough. Much of our spiritual writing has been worked out in the quiet of the cloister by religious and for the religious. To them we must be and are eternally grateful. Today, however, there is a need for collaboration between priest and lay persons in order to work out the great traditional spiritual truths of the Church in the terms of John Smith, who works in the local bank and has a take-home pay of \$34.60 a week to provide for the needs of himself, his wife and his four children and who is thereby sorely tempted to practice contraception as a solution to his economic difficulties. Our classic spiritual truths must be thought out in terms of Mary Jones, who, as a human being, has the right to marry but is on the point of calling off her two-year engagement because she and her fiancé reside in a society where they cannot find a place to live. It must be thought of in terms of the young waitress who is deprived of a living wage, made almost completely dependent on tips, and who is thereby grievously tempted to lie regarding her income tax. Priests must come to know the lay apostles' problems *as they are* when they undertake the spiritual direction of those who suffer these problems. For this reason it would seem that there are certain basic principles that might be helpful to the priest in his direction of these lay apostles of our day.

Principles

(1) *The spiritual director must have the humility really to listen to lay people, as well as the ability to draw them out by skillful questioning.* When the lay apostle gets to the point of looking for a spiritual director he has already torn down part of the barrier that may have previously existed between himself and the priest. But he has not torn it all down. In talking about the things of the soul (and particularly the things of *his* soul or *her* soul) there is, quite often, a shyness on the part of the laity, an embarrassment, an "I-don't-know-why-I-am-talking;

about-this" attitude. The priest must be patient and persevering in breaking down this barrier. It will take time, lots of it, and sympathy. Many of them have never in their lives spoken intimately with a priest. Yet here is the raw material on which the priest must work. He must learn about and take an active interest in the home life of the lay apostle, the family, the working conditions, the conflicts, as well as the everyday failings, faults, and sins. He must come to know their generosity and even their heroism which very often is hidden behind a rough exterior. Moreover, his interest must be real and in no way superficial. He must develop, through the knowledge of the lay life and problems, that "compassion on the multitude" advocated by his Master and implicitly demanded of the priest by the person he directs.

(2) *Begin at the beginning.* The philosophical way to express this principle is the axiom *quidquid recipitur, recipitur secundum modum recipientis*: "Whatever is received is received according to the manner of the receiver." Our Lord's words, "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect," is the term of the spiritual life and therefore of spiritual direction. The beginning very often is a vague or a thoroughly confused human being who has sometimes even been partially dehumanized by many of the factors of modern life. It is this person the priest must begin with, and not some ideal Christian existing solely *in mente tantum*. If the person directed is found to be vaguely sacramental Catholic and nothing else, then that is where to start. Gradually he must be worked into an alert, integrated, living member of Christ's Mystical Body. Each one must always be filled; but not beyond his or her capacity, natural or supernatural. One does not fill a delicate wine glass with a firehose, nor does one undertake to fill a tub by means of an eyedropper.

(3) *The director should start from the problems of the one directed.* The genius of Jocism as an educational force in the spiritual and intellectual formation of lay apostles lies in the fact that Canon Cardijn very clearly recognized that the ordinary working man learns from problems back to principles, rather than vice versa. Therefore, direction of the ordinary lay apostle should not be a matter of conferences, however well prepared and delivered by the director. It is a matter of meeting the problems in this individual's life and the solving of these problems through every legitimate means, natural and supernatural. The principles will be learned and learned well, but in relation to concrete, personal problems and not in a vacuum. Lay people are not theologians. They think in lay terms and view things from a lay perspective. That perspective is ordinarily their own problems here and now and not something they may be able to apply several years from now.

(4) *Much formation can be given through action.* This principle is especially useful in the direction of the young, particularly at the beginning of their spiritual climb. Man can and does learn by doing. Very often this is a psychological device. Young people want to do things and they want to do them right away. They are not always content to wait until they have something to give; they want to give it now. Let them try. Inevitably they will meet failure and will return to their director with the sad tale of their defeat. Then is the time to inquire as to whether or not they have prayed about what they wanted to do, if they attended Mass for this intention, if they made any sacrifices. Usually they have not even thought along these lines. Often for the first time in their lives with the assistance of their director they will come to see the vital connection between things spiritual and the problems of daily life. It is a revelation, in spite of the fact that many times previously they have been told of this connection. What once was a matter of words has now become a vital, pulsating reality because it has been experienced. They can now be sent to *do* convinced that they must *be* before they can accomplish.

(5) *The director must by his own life and example inspire confidence and invite imitation.* People cannot be fooled long. These lay apostles look to their priest and expect to see in his life the incarnation of all that he is advocating in theirs. They are not usually unreasonable, just logical. The disciple is not above the master; and they know it. (Although those who have had much experience in dealing with these lay apostles are unanimous in agreeing that very often the master is inspired and edified by the disciples.)

The Life of Prayer

In one sense spiritual direction might be said to be almost entirely a matter of the development of the life of prayer. The degree of one's prayer might be termed the thermometer that is put in the mouth of the patient to test the general health. The director should lose no time in ascertaining by means of well-chosen questions the general prayer practices of the one directed. "When do you pray?" "How long?" "What do you say?" "Do you use words?" "Do you ever think when you pray?" "Do you ever *just* think when you pray?" "Do you ever try to pray during your work?" "On the subway?" "On the bus?" "How do you make out?" If the prayer habits are weak, they must be strengthened by perhaps advocating a little more regularity in the daily prayers as well as a little more devotion and attention to what is being said.

Gradually the lay apostle can be introduced to the idea of simple meditation, if only for five or ten minutes a day, or even if interspersed with daily activity—just a thought of God or a short ejaculation. There

will be difficulties in getting started. The priest might recommend some appropriate book, perhaps the New Testament or the *Imitation of Christ*, in order to get the mind started. The lay person must always be warned against the temptation to "just read," and be encouraged to think about God and love Him, which is of the very essence of meditation.

Then there is the matter of distractions, the tendency to become discouraged because of an inability to hold the mind fixed on God for any length of time. The director must make clear the distinction between voluntary and involuntary distractions and assure the lay apostle that involuntary distractions, as Saint Thomas teaches, do not rob one of the merit nor the efficacy of the prayer although they do deprive us of the refreshment that should normally accompany prayer.

There should be a regular check-up on this initial meditation and constant encouragement to start over and to try again after failure. If this check-up is lacking there will be a slackening in effort and a gradual conviction that "this meditation business is not for me," a situation which, of course, would be tragic.

The director should be prepared for the so-called "trials" that normally accompany the spiritual life. He should be able to recognize them and distinguish them from man-made trials arising from discouragement, laziness, sensuality or other personal problems. He should know that God usually encourages beginners and grants them certain consolations in prayer. He should likewise know that very often there follows a period of dryness when the soul must be reminded of the necessity of loving the God of consolations rather than the consolations of God. He must be able to recognize the transition between meditation where the intellect predominates and the prayer of the will where the emphasis must be on the use of the affections and where acts of the will such as love, humility, sorrow, etc., predominate. The lay apostle can very simply be instructed to say or think in terms of such basic concepts as "Jesus, I love You," "I need You," or "I am sorry for my sins and the sins of the world." When and if the soul outgrows meditation the director should recognize the signs that indicate that God wants it to proceed to some other form of prayer and must be able to pilot the soul into strange and deeper waters.

He must be ready to direct lay apostles in the higher states of prayer, and must never think that contemplation is something beyond their reach. They must always be encouraged to aim at the perfection of the Christian life which for lay people as well as for everyone else is a contemplation of God. The Holy Ghost in our day is working in mysterious ways and is raising up among lay people, particularly among these apostles, souls capable, under divine grace, of intimate states of

union with God. A more detailed study of Saint Thomas, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Teresa of Avila, and the other great mystical writers is practically a necessity at this point.

Renunciation

Side by side with the development of the life of prayer will go the development of the life of renunciation and mortification. In fact, the degree of one will often determine the degree of the other, and vice versa. Christ's teaching that "if any man will follow me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" must be stressed almost from the beginning. The lay apostle must be made to see the great sacrifices, and sometimes the frustrations, of modern life and he must be taught to use them as rungs on a ladder that leads to God rather than as obstacles thereto. The subway ride in the morning might be tedious; it probably is crowded and stuffy, even an affront to human dignity. While as an apostle the layman may be working to alleviate these conditions, at the same time he should be taught to offer them to God as acts of penance and reparation. Nothing should be wasted. All are opportunities for grace, the sacrament of the present moment. God gave man these moments. He allows these trials. They must be picked up and returned to Him. The lay apostle can also be taught to recognize the sacrifice involved in the generous giving of his time in the works of the apostolate, as well as the mortification involved in the quiet acceptance of a lack of understanding on the part of friends and relatives who often do not grasp the nature of the lay apostolate and who do not thereby appreciate his efforts. To these, of course, must be added the gradual mortification of the exterior and interior senses recommended in traditional spiritual literature without which the lay apostle can hardly hope to overcome the constant pull toward the things of earth, away from the things of God.

Conclusion

This is admittedly an incomplete picture. Much more could be said; much more remains to be said. There is a need, for example, of a detailed treatment on the use of the Liturgy in the training of lay apostles. This is tremendously important. It is to be fervently hoped that someone will give us this and soon. Likewise the experiences of priests who have labored in the formation of lay apostles should be invaluable. This article is only a beginning. It may have to be rethought and re-cast. Undoubtedly other priests have much to add from the wealth of their own experience, and perhaps much to subtract. So much the better. The important thing to remember is that souls are hungry for guidance along the way to God. For them the best is none too good.

FRANCIS N. WENDELL, O.P.

A Note on Action

By now it is platitudinous to say that as the Church in every age has called forth new Davids to meet her enemies, in this age she has summoned the layman to be her protagonist in a monstrous battle for the world.

Her call to the layman has been a call to action. Because the institutions of modern society have become so thoroughly dechristianized, she has commanded him to enter into the workshops, the market-places, the publishing houses, the centers of learning, the theatres, set upon them from within, and transform them. All the world's going and coming, every kind of work, eating and playing, grinding and hoeing, seafaring and lecturing, must be made Christian again and made to lead to Christ by His breathing of the Spirit into all.

As the layman heeded the summons, however, and as action began to dominate his thinking, he was met with certain warnings. Action is dangerous, he was told. It disturbs, distracts, and can captivate the soul; it can lead away from Christ even when undertaken for Him. Hence, an apostle must be on his guard against its effects, must frequently withdraw and retreat from its confusion, even as did the Master. If his interior life is not preserved and deepened, he will be but beating the air, and this orgy of action will end in destruction.

All that was said of the eminent importance of the interior life was undeniably true. Nevertheless, there was a concomitant truth which demanded just as much emphasis, but which often went, if not without saying, without the shouting that was its due. This truth is that the life of action *in itself* has a positive and indispensable contribution to make to the achievement of sanctity and contemplation. The failure to insist upon this principle, to explore its implications, and to convince every apostle of it, condemns all to mediocrity by setting up a dichotomy in the spiritual life. If it be necessary to warn of the pitfalls of action, it is necessary to warn of the even greater dangers of certain of the states leading to contemplation, it is equally necessary to praise it from the housetops as a way to sanctity, as a way to the very heights of prayer.

What is the life of action but the life of the moral virtues, those habits which, according to the definition of Saint Thomas, are concerned with external things? Devotion to the active apostolate, provided love is its wellspring, is not only not a hindrance to perfect prayer and perfect union with God, but actually creates the dispositions necessary to their attainment. Contemplation itself is a flowering and fructifying; if the root and the stem of activity are not present, there will be neither blooming nor bearing in the life of the soul. Saint Gregory insists that

"those who wish to hold the fortress of contemplation must first of all train in the camp of action."

The course of the active life is in this light a guard of virtue too; it defends against vainglory, for example, by its inevitable failures and defeats; or against egoism by its devotion to others; or against complacency by the magnitude of its tasks. The labor of the apostolate is also a stimulus to virtue, to pity and mercy, to sorrow and gratitude, to fear and trust, to liberality and love. A vision of hungry people will bring forth charity from an apostle, the charity of daily bread, when his spiritual readings may have spawned nothing but a dreamer's abstract compassion; a meeting with vicious blasphemy against God will wring out more penance in a day than a whole Lent of sermons. Small wonder that Saint Teresa of Avila is found (though not found by enough) writing for her daughters on the works due under necessity or obedience. "And, believe me, it is not length of time spent in prayer that brings a soul benefit; when we spend our time in good works, it is a great help to us and a better and quicker preparation for the enkindling of our love than many hours of meditation."

Another of action's contributions is its freeing of the apostle from the illusions and imaginings which do so much to keep souls from perfection. The pressure of labor on the Christian worker, the carbon realism of daily contacts and associations, will push him to an awareness of the precariousness of his goodness and of his frightening capacity for sin, and, consequently, to a solid humility, all of which might escape a monastic soul. A Christian mother busied with the needs of her six children, focusing her attention on them with the unique self-forgetfulness of maternal love, will avoid the dangers of the egocentrism which might plague one cloistered. The Catholic Action leader in the thick of the apostolate can acquire a magnanimity of soul to which the recluse might never come. Saint Teresa, again writing of activities undertaken out of obedience or charity, teaches:

It is here, my daughters, that love is to be found—not hidden away in corners, but in the midst of the occasions of sin; and, believe me, although we may more often fail and commit small lapses, our gain will be incomparably the greater. . . . The reason I say we gain more in the other way is that it makes us realize what we are and of how much our virtue is capable. For if a person is always recollected, however holy he may think himself to be, he does not know if he is patient and humble, and he has no means of knowing it. . . . And I think it is a greater favor if the Lord sends us a single day of humble self-knowledge, even at the cost of many afflictions and trials, than many days of prayer.

The life of action itself, lived fully and out of love, might well be for the man of action "the dark night of the senses," that first part of the path to intimate union with God, a stage through which all souls must pass if they would achieve increased measure of perfection. The dark night consists in a strenuous renunciation of pleasure and the setting aside of all desires save those for the love of God and the cross of Christ. Entering the active apostolate in a hostile milieu, the layman follows Saint John of the Cross' urging to choose "that which is most difficult . . . that which is wearisome." In its labor he gives up his desire for physical comfort and ease; in his poverty, the seeking of riches; in his charity, the service of self; in his communal activities, the longing for personal praise; in his submission to the decisions of his co-workers, his desire for complete self-determination.

Such stress on action is by way of balancing a tipped scale. The lack of understanding of the place of action in the life of the soul has disturbed many a pious priest and nun as well as the fervent layman. The error involved has produced that mentality which imagines that the soul is advancing by seven-league strides in the quiet of a retreat or of longer seclusion, but that it regresses as soon as it returns to the noise of action. Because the parish, the classrooms, the hospital, the press-room, fail to give the comfortable security of the chapel, hands are thrown up in despair. Yet, as Saint Thomas would insist with such results, true virtue in the midst of activities which are manifestly the Will of God would "quell the disturbance of outward occupations." This is the secret of the wonderful recollection of the saint busied with innumerable tasks. "You must not build your foundations on prayer and contemplation alone," Saint Teresa writes, "for, unless you strive after the virtues and practice them, you will never grow to be more than dwarfs."

If the gift of contemplation is bestowed upon the soul by God, it is immeasurably more fruitful for others than is action and should be sought even at the seeming expense of action. Yet, because the necessity of serving others will often demand it, even one who has reached the heights of prayer will leave the setting which makes the act of contemplation more easily attainable. He is then, however, like the creative writer who must engage in some practical work, but whose mind and heart are constantly occupied with the subject of his creation. All that is lacking is the actual exercise of his art, and this he pursues with a rush and with joy as soon as he is able to return to his study. So does the man of prayer, although certainly not regretting the work, return from his labor to the best part, to the gift he has had to put aside, the dispositions and desire for which he has carried with him at every moment.

REV. FRED DIGBY

Piety for Men

By His own statement we are assured that Christ is less concerned about those who climb the tortuous paths of Mount Carmel than He about the souls who wander directionless through the woods on the plains below. Many who are seeking God elsewhere than in His Church are not so much perverse in their choice of direction as misinformed by the false signposts erected by those who consider themselves among the elect. Among these wanderers are the men who have falsely concluded that "religion is for women and children."

Those who frequently have encountered this remark uttered with emphatic vehemence will recall that certain tonal inflections and gestures implied a heresy not explicated in the words themselves. The argument presented more accurately would be stated, "religion is for women and children *primarily*" or "religion is for women and children *exclusively*."

This attitude persists in varying degrees among many Catholic men today, much to the astonishment of the Church Militant, the Church Suffering and the Church Triumphant. Abraham and Moses, we can be sure, are not amused, nor is their brother patriarch of the New Testament, Saint Patrick. The glorious choir of the apostles takes quiet but forceful difference with the contention of effeminacy. The admirable company of prophets shake their glorified beards in tangible evidence of masculinity. The white-robed army of martyrs, composed of both sexes, unhesitatingly testifies that religion merits the blood of men, whether male or female.

Those lesser saints, our venerable European forebears who fought manfully, lived verily and sometimes died courageously in the Faith: that we might inherit the gift, raise their baritone voices in protest against such a calumny. A clergy, masculine from cover to core, could not concur with such a view. If all that were not enough, the nail-pierced hands of Christ, calloused by years of manual labor, can be presented as clinching evidence of the masculinity of the Faith.

The temptation after such testimony is to throw the case out of court. On the surface the charge of effeminacy seems rash and unsubstantiated. We should, however, give the plaintiff an opportunity to state his case. In answer to the foregoing defense of the masculine nature of piety, his rebuttal might go like this: "You have proved only that Christianity is originally and traditionally masculine. If it is a living Faith, what evidence have we here in America that religion evokes a masculine piety or provokes a masculine dynamism? Show me signs of a virile Faith among American Catholic men!"

This question cannot be answered glibly. It cannot be pushed aside as irrelevant. We may recall the news stories of priests in war and peace administering with heroic courage to the needs of souls. Processions of Holy Name men and other public manifestations of masculine piety can be produced as evidence. But are these enough? Are they typical or isolated events? What about the vast majority of Catholic laymen? Can we point to their way of life as examples of Christian idealism and aspiration in startling contrast to their non-Catholic friends? I think not. I think masculine piety is on trial, and we might well examine the situation and make some sort of judgment.

One fact that is quite obvious is that religion appeals to the man in a different way from the way it appeals to the woman. It is the same faith, it evokes the same virtue, but the disposition to it is different. As religious experience matures, as it passes from the elementary stage of psychological and intellectual union to sanctity and mystical union, the appeal and response tend to become the same regardless of sex. Until spiritual maturity is achieved, however, the psychology of the sexes is an important instrument in conversion and growth.

When stating a proposition concerning the psychological peculiarities of the sexes, a writer runs the risk of all sorts of misunderstandings. To avoid this as much as possible please bear in mind these qualifications of what I have to say. Psychology deals with tendencies, not qualities. The masculine and feminine persons represent two essential possibilities of the *same nature*. They are both equal in potentialities and equal in dignity. It is because they are essentially incomplete and oriented to each other that they tend to follow parallel and converging paths rather than identical paths. Neither revelation nor common sense admits of any essential inferiority of one sex to the other. The gifts are of equal value. The dependence is mutual. When I use the word *effeminate* I use it in a derogatory sense as distinct from the word *feminine*. Effeminacy is a softness, a lack of discipline, a sentimental romanticism which is a despicable characteristic either in man or woman. It is a perversion of feminine virtue just as ruthlessness and emotionalism are a perversion of masculine virtue.

Human behavior shows that the tendency in the woman is to be concerned with persons and particulars. The tendency in the man is to be concerned with things and generalities. The loyalty of the woman usually finds its object in a responsive person. The loyalty of the man usually finds its object in a compelling cause. These facts, I believe are self evident and, fortunately, they are the only facts I need for the development of my argument.

Religion is loyalty to a God Who can be conceived of as a Person (for He is a Person) or a Cause (for He is *the Good*.)

The saints know God as He is in Himself, as both the Person Who loves and is loved and as the Cause to be pursued and attained. In the first stages of holiness, however, the woman tends to seek a personal relationship of love whereas the man tends to seek a moving and satisfying ideal.

Now there is something paradoxical in the two conceptions of God, one as a Person and the other as an Ideal. As human beings we find it difficult to separate the idea of a person from the idea of a particular individual. For us, the idea of a person excludes all other persons. On the other hand the concept of an ideal abhors particularization. Goodness, justice, liberty, or love, are nothing unless they are universal and non-exclusive.

Since the Person with whom she seeks communion is invisible the particular tangible instruments of the Faith become the loving object of the woman's devotion. Since the Ideal to which he aspires is a universal, the man is loath to limit this ideal to any particular place, form or priesthood. Until the paradox of particularity and catholicity is resolved, the man is disturbed by the very limitations which appeal to the woman. She loves the church and the priest, the altar and the rosary, the hymn and the formal prayer because they are so familiar, so close and so tangible. He is suspicious of these things because they are so localized, so exclusive and familiar that they hardly seem to do justice to the Ideal which is all-inclusive, all-embracing.

At any time in history or in any place on the globe, this divergence of attitude between man and woman can be expected. In our time and in this country, the situation has been aggravated by the fact that practical Catholicism has assumed an effeminate cast. This effeminacy, evidenced in liturgical practices and standards of conduct, with emphasis on the personal, the sensate, the devotional, cannot be attributed to any one cause but to a number of historical trends both within and without the Church. These trends can be categorized loosely under the heading of *secularism*, and secularism has resulted in:

- (1) The relegation of religion to one phase of human activity.
- (2) The confinement of religion to the area of the church and the school.
- (3) The regarding of the religious act as a personal secret quite divorced from any vital social significance.
- (4) The divorce of faith from reason as though they were irreconcilable.

It is obvious that religion telescoped to such narrow dimensions focuses undue emphasis upon the aspects of the Faith most appealing to the feminine psychology. The home, the church and the school become for the Catholic mother the angles of a familiar triangle. S

nds to direct her religious perceptions almost exclusively to that closure. These are her daily and particular concern because they involve the children and are within the scope of her normal interests. man's activities and interests, even though they may radiate from the home, find their target in the shop and office, and the social and political problems of the day. All of these places and problems have been long divorced from religion as to ends as well as means. Whenever he enters the religious sphere the man feels that he is in some sense entering the domain of the woman. Any parochial activity not specifically for men is, per se, for women. The Ideal, that concept of God psychologically attractive to man, can only touch him when it is made manifest in the work world, professional world, scientific world, and political world with which he is in contact. The secularist divorce which sets the *mystical* against the practical, and the facts of revelation against the facts of sensible observation, by inference pushes religion over to the distaff side of the table. This localization of religion to the secret intercourse and the parish buildings has produced the ghetto-catholicism very apparent in many quarters. It would not be hard to prove that the ghetto complex is basically effeminate even when it expresses itself in violently defensive apologetics. The Ideal is catholic and of cosmic scope; it is affirmative and universal, impatient of ghettos, desirous of assimilating all things, assured of its universality. The spiritually immature man can be sympathized with when he is disheartened by a restricted, particularized, sensate, localized and maternal religiosity so at variance with the Ideal to which he clumsily aspires. The sight of such a facade is enough to drive him away before he has time to enter and discover that there is less contradiction in localized catholicism than he first supposed. The fact that the Faith is being sold short tends to make the prospect underestimate its true value.

Few active Catholics are unaware of the general irresponsibility of men toward their religious duties. Steps have already been taken to restore liturgical practices to their proper purity which would remove the effeminacy and make them more psychologically appealing to men. Priests everywhere are working to induce men to come closer to the altar. Religion teachers of boys and young men are striving to *masculinize* religion. We are indebted to them (perhaps as much for their errors as for their successes) for making it possible to make certain suggestions for improvement tested by practice.

The great danger, I think, is that a study of the tendencies peculiar to man and woman might lead us to use such studies as a norm for describing apostolic techniques. We can make the mistake of supposing that that which is most psychologically attractive is the best norm to use. That is too much like asking a patient to prescribe his

own medicine. More than that it excludes, or merely tolerates, all of the unpleasant things that no one likes, such as sacrifice, suffering, penance and contrition.

An example of the false principle in practice would be to have parochial fashion shows for women who are already jeopardizing their souls' salvation by an inordinate interest in clothes. Another is parochial emphasis on sports for men who are already neglecting their Christian and patriotic responsibilities in pursuit of sports. Even in the hierarchy of psychological urges there is usually something higher to appeal to than vanity and playfulness. The lady parishioner who puts on the latest creation is less disposed if anything to put on her Creator. The virility of sports is not so contagious that religion will get it by contact. I realize that these things are merely "come-ons" to attract the people and are usually quite distasteful to the priest who uses the technique. It is my experience that such methods actually repel the people who *would* go to get pure and unadulterated religious training. If religion does not attract people in a day when people are hungry for a faith it is not because religion is lacking in secular glamor but because religion is being spiked with adulterating syrups.

If the male or female psychology does not prescribe the technique of appeal, then of what use is the inquiry into the peculiarities of each? The answer is simply that Catholicism *lived* (not doctrine, nor a technique, nor a movement, nor a view), a living presence in a person, in a family, in a community, has an appeal to both men and women equally. Men may dislike devotional services, women may dislike study clubs, but they both like supernatural charity. Men may dislike sugary hymns and women may dislike sermons on unionism, but they both like supernatural fortitude. We need not look further for proof of this than the Catholic Worker movement. Whatever else the Catholic Worker has done it has given an example of supernatural charity and supernatural fortitude that has attracted the interest of thousands. Literally hundreds of men have sought out the Catholic Worker houses because full-blooded, unadulterated virtue has an appeal that cannot be ignored. Even those who differ with the Catholic Worker opinion in whole or in part cannot deny the heroic virtue evidenced in its leaders.

If religion does not appeal to men, an inquiry into the reasons cannot help us, not by showing how to *present* the Faith, but how to *practice* it. The Faith when lived generates its own form. When it is lived it may provoke love and it may provoke hate, but never indifference.

Why is it that many men do not see the Ideal in Catholic life? I think it is because we Catholics do not exhibit either austerity or catholicity. The story is told of the man who sold all that he had to purchase the jewel of great price. This is the sort of testimony lacking

ay. As far as the outsider can see, the price of the jewel of Faith adherence to a group of precepts in theory if not in practice, the obligation of Sunday Mass and a meatless diet on Fridays. The same Catholic in pursuit of a better standard of living exhibits a much greater propensity for sacrifice than he does in pursuit of the Ideal. The state sets a higher price on citizenship through the levying of taxes, the shortening of our lives, and the asking of the same life in time of war. In an open market, for everyone to see, the jewel of Faith is marked down at a price lower than that of loyalty to mammon and loyalty to the state. It is difficult for the uninitiated to see that the jewel is worth more than the price quoted.

The key to the problem of masculine piety, to my mind, is found in the word *Catholic*. The word Catholic as an adjective to describe the Faith has a vertical as well as a horizontal meaning. The horizontal meaning is, that as a way of supernatural life Christianity is for all mankind, and that the fruits of the Incarnation and the doctrine of salvation are meant for all men at all times. The Church was instituted to spread the Faith across the globe and down the centuries, alive in substance, precise in doctrine, healing and uplifting in its effect. The vertical meaning is that the nature of the Faith is to reorient all men and all things to God. There is nothing to which the Faith is irrelevant, and the relevance of everything is found in the Faith.

This vertical aspect of the Faith is seldom revealed in the attitudes and habits of today's Catholics. When it is understood and acted upon, men will see clearly that Catholicism is the ideal. They will see that Catholicism demands that Christ be the center and orientation of all our acts and all our desires. The jobs that we hold, the vocations we choose, the studies we pursue, the companions we keep, the recreation we enjoy, the ambitions to which we aspire, only make Christian sense if they are oriented to God and this not merely by intention but by their nature and end.

To summarize, we can say that men fail to see in Catholicism as generally practiced the all-embracing Ideal which is their first immature concept of God. They fail to see it first, of course, because of their spiritual immaturity, but also because the Faith as generally practiced has become effeminate and localized. We cannot very well increase their maturity until we have first attracted them to the spiritual director and the Sacraments. So the first step must be a testimony to them of austerity (as against effeminacy) and catholicity (as against localization).

It must be understood that in this particular case we cannot let a patient prescribe his own medicine. In other words, we are not looking for tricks and tactics artificially devised with which to lure the men into the churches. If men currently find juke boxes, beer and

sports inordinately appealing, that has nothing to do with us. From us they want some evidence of the Ideal, an ideal which when acquired will give them a joy, a stimulation and a virility that they are seeking now in the juke boxes, beer and sports.

Catholicism Lived

Stated in the fewest possible words the thing they seek, whether they know it or not, is an evidence of *Catholicism lived*. Catholicism lived is austere and it is catholic, and it is the only convincing testimony that Catholicism is directed to the Ideal.

Catholicism lived sounds very much like a definition of sanctity, but sanctity is not precisely what I mean. Catholicism lived is a group manifestation of Christian virtue, organized on the social level, unified on the intellectual level and orientated to God on the spiritual level. Just as the saint, as an isolated phenomenon, demonstrates the orientation of human personality to God, Catholicism lived is a community of persons which demonstrates the orientation of human society to God. The aspiration to personal sanctity is implied in it and is the vitalizing factor, but it is the group testimony of integrated Catholic living which is the immediate end of such an organization.

Let's consider briefly the practical steps that might be taken to bring such a group into existence within a parish. The Holy Ghost will provide different counsels, different opportunities and different apostolic material in different areas. I only devise this set of practical suggestions in order to demonstrate more clearly the theory of Catholicism lived.

Suppose we choose as the conceptual day for this revolutionary parochial venture the Feast of Christ the King, October 31. This great feast upon which day the Church makes present the coronation of Christ, King of all mankind, the end of all free and necessary activity in the universe, seat of benevolence and judgment, the proper object of all men's desires, works and prayers, is the most appropriate day for instituting a new order founded in Christ. The coming of the Kingdom should be anticipated with the same vigor and widespread proclamation as is usually occasioned by the annual parochial bazaar. Cards, posters, tickets, flyers, announcements, should be drawn up in bold and colorful phrases, telling of the advent of King Christ to reign over the entire world and specifically over that parish. Special emphasis should be brought to bear on the men of the parish, especially those who have been bored or dismayed by the dull complacency of the old era which is about to die. Mothers, wives and girl friends should be encouraged to impress upon their men that a new era of masculine piety is about to begin. Every man should be urged to go to Confession and Com-

nion, leaving as little loophole for excuse as they get on Mother's y.

The Day of the King will begin with a High Mass at 6:00 A.M. Perhaps a vigil service the night before will get the men to bed early (that they can get up for this early Mass.) At the High Mass a sermon will be preached on Christ the King, Lord of our souls, Lord of our lives, Lord of our country, Lord of the universe, Lord over the U.N., Lord over the C.I.O., Lord over the N.A.M., etc. Emphasis will be on fidelity in His cause and catholicity in its furtherance.

The same sermon will be preached at all other Masses with the reference that all those who do not participate in the celebration of this feast are nothing less than traitors. In the afternoon there will be prayers, benediction and a procession, rain or shine (preferably rain so that everyone will get soaking wet). The procession will be to carry a statue of Our Lord, King of the Universe. The men will march dressed in their work clothes, each carrying a tool of his trade or an object of his craft. Working girls will do the same. These objects will be blessed and offered as symbols of the sacrifice of the man in his work to Christ. Each family, in the person of the husband, will be annexed to the new-found kingdom. Every child should be present to see his father and mother joined together in their new dedication.

After the procession a banquet will be served with food prepared by the housewives. It will be informal, noisy, friendly (no stuffed shirts or professional waiters). The less organized preparation for the banquet the better it will be. What one housewife lacks another will provide. Men and women will get to know their neighbors, exchanging a sandwich for an apple, or a bottle opener for a shaker of salt.

In the evening the baby-sitting teen-agers will take over the children while the mothers and fathers, and the single men and single women, attend the first council of the government of Christ the King. The object of this meeting will be to get men and women to be the lay leaders of Catholic Action groups in the parish (for Catholic Action is the structure of the new kingdom). The qualifications for leadership must be rigorous: daily Mass and Communion, completely dedicated lives, apostolicity in society, the firm resolution to integrate their daily lives with the Faith.

These leaders when enrolled will be the contact of the laity with the priest. Working with their neighbors, they will carry the Faith into those areas from which the priest has been excluded. He will build their spirituality, bringing their immature zeal to a full fruition.

An inquiry conducted on various nights throughout the octave will help the leaders determine what practical problems they must focus their attention upon. The hidden kingdom of Christ in the heart must

be made incarnate and visible through some particular apostolate. Perhaps a family apostolate will be the suggestion, or the Christianization of the local factory, or a missionary activity to help the Negro. The local need will stipulate the proper action to be taken.

When these organizations hit their stride the man who says "religion is for women and children" will have to do so in secret. The austerity of Catholicism lived, of families accepting their due quota of children as new subjects of Christ the King, of charity so that there be no one in need within the parish whether Catholic nor not, of social justice unrelaxed in its vigilance to see that everyone receives his due of catholicity in contributions of money and goods wherever in the world the need may be, of inquiry—searching the mind of God for new evidence of His greatness, and searching the universe for new fields to be redeemed, is that kind of austerity that will be masculine and Catholic beyond words.

When the newcomer enters the climate generated by a Catholicism lived, the paradox that bothered him will be resolved. The Good which he sought will soon be recognized as a personal, intimate God, localized in the Eucharist but yet Lord of the universe, particularized in the Church yet the proper object of the adoration of every nation.

The mature participation of the men by the same token will enlarge the field of the women's religious perceptions. They will recognize *my* God as *the Good*. They will see the direct relationship between social justice in unions, for the Negro, for the Jew, for the poor, and the *my* God of their spiritual devotion. The beholder will see in the activity of men and women living the Faith the reconciliation of the paradox of a God Who is the familiar object of devotion and *the Good* under Whose banner armies of men will march forever.

ED WILLOCK

The Church is one, holy
catholic and apostolic



BOOK REVIEWS

An Admirable Book

AMERICAN HUMANISM AND THE NEW AGE

by Louis J. A. Mercier
Price, \$4.00

What a curious age we live in! Pseudo-scholars and half-baked, ill-educated "experts" keep our printing presses busy hammering out their inaccuracies and sophisms, which are then solemnly reviewed by the leading newspapers of the country. It is a delightful shock, then, to discover an author who is educated, integrated, learned and charitable, who can write books dealing with fundamental problems clearly and truthfully against a background of exhaustive knowledge. Dr. Mercier is such a man. In this book he examines the contemporary state of higher education and liberal thought in the United States. You could not wish for a more admirable survey, for he discusses the leading figures, including Babbitt, Dr. Hutchins, Walter Lippmann, Lynn Harold Hough and Norman Foerster. He clearly delineates the underlying philosophical problems, and describes the relevant educational experiments. All this is done in the light of his own avowed, uncompromising, but also unbelligerent Catholicism, which he describes as the philosophical position of Supernaturalized Humanism.

This book accentuates the positive. Dr. Mercier says there are two trends in American thought, which find their sharpest division in respect to the nature of man. He is not here concerned to trace in detail the aberrations of the naturalists, John Dewey et al, but discusses those who are struggling for the light and who have arrived philosophically at various degrees of the truth. They all regard man as spirit as well as matter, and most of them see the existence of God and man's dependence on Him for help. Without embracing the Catholic doctrine of supernatural grace, they nevertheless leave the door open for the fullness of the truth. Dr. Mercier's description of the St. John's University experiment is especially interesting.

At the end of the book Dr. Mercier speculates on the possibility of an educational compromise on the position he calls Theistic Humanism, that is to say, on the basis of philosophy and the natural law, following the Pope's own exhortation for cooperation among all men of good will. But in an epilogue written recently the author is less optimistic. Oddly enough, his compromise suggestion rests on inter-faith cooperation, yet most of the men the book is concerned with have approached the Catholic position from agnosticism or irreverence rather than through the traditional Protestant sects. It would therefore seem that there is more hope that such men (either they themselves or others following the same trend) will help restore education on a fully Catholic basis than that a compromise can or will be reached. Insofar as there is residual truth in Protestantism it should be cherished, of course, but is it sufficiently dynamic for a world where the forces of error and evil are achieving a militant synthesis which threatens to sweep all before it?

CAROL JACKSON

Worship and Work

THE SACRAMENTAL WAY

Edited by Mary Perkins
Sheed & Ward, \$5.00

Despite the calumny to the contrary about the liturgical movement, and those who have made it a vital force, has not been unconcerned about the affairs of men conducted without the walls of the parish church. Those Catholics immediately concerned with social action might ex-

cusably become impatient with what they consider luxurious preoccupation with rite and ritual, but such impatience cannot overlook the two incontestable facts that the spirit of the liturgical movement implies and demands a zealous social apostolate, and the emphasis placed upon living *in* Christ rather than merely *for* Christ is an emphasis foreign to so many Catholic activities.

The liturgical movement is a necessary companion to Catholic social action. They need each other. Miss Perkins exhibits in her choice of material, and the categorizing thereof, the same desire to make this wedding consummate which has characterized all of her vital contributions to Catholic thought. She chooses her material from among the best of the talks given at the six annual Liturgical Weeks which preceded the latest one held in Boston. Each section of the book is prefaced by a pertinent quotation from *Mediator Dei*, the papal encyclical on the Liturgy issued last November. The sections are divided into chapters, each of which serves to detail and clarify the statement of Our Holy Father.

The pattern followed from section to section leads logically from *being to doing*, from the altar to the market place, from the spirit incorporated in Mass and Sacrament to the spirit made incarnate in life and work.

The wealth of material flowing from so many alert and inspired minds warrants careful and studious reading, and Miss Perkins has added suggestions for study and a bibliography which make of this book a veritable gateway into the mind of the Church. Doctrine and application are seldom so beautifully and provocatively taught.

ED WILLOCK

BOOK NOTES

Three more volumes of the works of John Henry Newman have appeared these containing his essays and sketches. That makes six books so far of a projected series of twenty. Longmans, Green deserves commendation for making Newman's works available again, especially since the entire previous stock of his *Collected Works* was destroyed in a London blitz. Unhappily, the editor of the series killed himself recently. Three more volumes are nearly ready (two of them *Sermons*, the other *Development of Christian Doctrine*) and the publishers plan to get a new editor to complete the project. Each book sells for \$3.50.

Two recent reprints made by the Newman Press (Westminster, Maryland) will particularly interest INTEGRITY readers. One is St. Francis de Sales' classic *Introduction to a Devout Life*, which everyone ought to read but which is especially suited to girls (cloth \$2.50, paper \$1.25). The other is Bellarmine's famous *Meditations on Christian Dogma* in two volumes (\$7.50 the set). These meditations follow the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas and are practically the standard for theological meditations.

Two more spiritual works of interest have come out recently. Father M. Sorley's second volume of *Meditations for Everyman* is one of them. These meditations follow the Church year and are based on the daily Liturgy. Volume II covers the time from Pentecost to Advent. The meditations are simple and pertinent to daily life (Herder, \$2.75). The other is a slim volume of meditations by Paul Claudel, *Lord, Teach Us How to Pray* (Longmans, \$2.00) woven around some pictures. It is really an exhortation to the ordinary common man to draw aside and pray. Claudel writes with the simplicity of a contemplative and is at once practical and poetical. It is an effective book quite out of proportion to its length and the "science" involved.



WE WOULD LIKE TO BET

(if there were any way of collecting) that YOUNG MR. NEWMAN (\$5.00), by Maisie Ward, is one book about himself that Newman likes best. When Maisie Ward decided to write it, she said, with a gleam in her eye, "There will be such a lot of lovely research to do." That was six years ago, and no one who reads the book will doubt that she has enjoyed them. She read all that Newman spoke of as having influenced him; she was allowed access to masses of family papers kept by Newman's sisters' descendants and untouched before; in the book we get all the enjoyment without the work. The picture she gives of Newman's priceless family is really clear, we really see what made Newman himself the kind of man he was—"you cannot know the first forty years of a man's life, if you want to understand him after forty," as she well says. Here we do understand both Newman and the unfamiliar England and Church of England in which he grew up. Do get hold of this by fair means or foul!

TREASURY OF RUSSIAN SPIRITUALITY (\$6.50), edited by G. P. Fedotov, is the first serious survey of its kind to appear in English—or, in fact, in any language. The selections given are from the eleventh century to the twentieth. Some of them are pretty much like anyone else's spiritual writing, but the rest (especially the Life of Archpriest Avvakum by himself) could only be Russian, and are to a Western reader both touching and indelibly amusing—the kind of amusement that makes you love the person you are laughing at. If you have trouble in remembering to say the prayers after Mass for Russia, this will make you add other prayers as well: it gives a picture of Russian Christianity which is most encouraging—such deep roots are not so easily destroyed as selfish dictators may suppose.

Carol Jackson reviewing THE MEANING OF MAN (\$4.00), by Jean Mouroux, in last month's *Integrity* said it was "the best book I've ever read about the nature of man," which seems to make further remarks from us superfluous. Except to say that we agree, and hope you do.

There is much more we should like to tell you about and haven't room for. We suggest that you write us for a Fall list and a *Trumpet*.

SHEED & WARD

New York 3



